



## **SIGNER OF THE U.S. CONSTITUTION**

### **WILLIAM LIVINGSTON**

*1723 — 1790*

William Livingston was the first elected Governor of New Jersey from 1776 - 1790. He graduated from Yale in 1741, and became a lawyer. In 1760 he settled at Elizabethtown. His "Liberty Hall," on Morris Avenue is still standing. Livingston was a member of the Continental Congress in 1774. In 1776 he was the Commander in Chief of the New Jersey Militia as well as Governor. As the first Governor under freedom, he drafted many original laws, providing groundwork for an excellent New Jersey system. An ardent patriot, his family was sometimes hiding from the British. A critic said his brilliant wit sometimes exceeded his strength of thinking as when he criticized ladies of rural Bergen for ostentatious showing of many petticoats and suggested some be remade to protect soldiers from inclement weather. He added that women in that part of the country had worn the breeches for over a century and "... it is highly reasonable that men should now ... make booty of the petticoats." The township of Livingston is named in his honor. Governor Tom Kean is a direct descendant of William Livingston.